News-item on "Jawan kills Colonel, 3 colleagues in J.K."

807. SHRI K.R. MALKANI:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-items which appeared in the 'Indian Express' and 'The Times of India' dated the 17th June, 1997, under the heading "Jawan kills Colonel, 3 colleagues in J.K." and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether similar incidents have taken place in the last three years and if so, the details thereof including the precise reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have tried to find out the reasons for the occurrence of these incidents and if so, the details thereof and the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) Yes, Sir. An army Havildar shot dead a Colonel, a Captain and two Subedars before killing himself at Hirpur in Jammu & Kashmir on 15th June 1997.

(b) There have been ten such incidents including that of 15th June 1997 during the last three years. Inquiry in some of the cases indicates that the reasons vary from family problems to acts of indiscipline.

(c) A study has been ordered at the level of Army Headquarters to go into these incidents.

Safety measures for lakes and boat club under Army

808. SHRI GYAN RANJAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Negligence Costs Army 8 Lakh" published int he 'Hindustan Times' dated the 2nd July, 1997;

(b) whether Government, inview of the directions of the Commission, propose to provide necessary sefety measures in all the lakes, boat club etc. under the control of army, so as to avert such accidents in future, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to fix responsibility for the tragic accident and to take action against the persons responsible for the accident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A Court of Inquiry was held by Headquarters Eastern Air Command to inquire into the accident. The Court of Inquiry has held that "No person or organisation be blamed for the accident". However, in view of the adverse verdict held by the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission, in addition to existing safety measures and guidelines for safe operation of boats used for training, instructions have been issued by the Army Authorities for strict adherence by all to prevent recurrence of such accidents.

Surplus chassis for specialist vehicles

809. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the IAF has been holding on its inventory 42 chassis for specialist vehicles for over 3-5 years at a cost of Rs. 4.91 crores and that they remain surplus to their requirement; and

(b) if so, the justification for such waste?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU): (a) and (b) Out of 42 chassis, 41 have already been utilised by the IAF Remaining one is also being planned to be used by them.